

[Approved at 10/25/23 Housing Board Meeting](#)

Boxborough Housing Board

Minutes of Wednesday, September 6, 2023 meeting

In-person, Town Hall Boxborough MA 01719

Housing Board Members Present: Al Murphy, Chair; Channing Wagg, Vice Chair; Jessie Robinson, Korrine Stephens, Ron Vogel

Invited Attendees present: Becky Neville, Wendy Trinks

Other Attendees: Elizabeth Nichols

A quorum being present, Chair Murphy called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

I. Information Items

- a. Chair Murphy remarked on the Boxborough Fire Department's 9-11-2001 Remembrance to be held at the fire station on Monday, Sept. 11th and commented on the Boxborough Sustainability Committee's Carbon Crew four-session information program. Ms. Nichols added comments about this,
- b. Ms. Trinks noted that a celebration of Pastor Cindy Worthington-Berry's ministry to the community will be held on September 21 in the Grange Hall before she leaves for the position of senior pastor at First Congregational Church, UCC, in Natick, Mass.
- c. Chair Murphy then remarked on the 2020 Census data being incorporated into the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, EOHLC (formerly the Department of Housing and Community Development, DHCD) and pointed out that the Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) of 266 units was now 11.35% of the town's 2,343 year-round housing units.

II. Minutes

The minutes of the August 16, 2023 meeting were reviewed and several corrections/omissions identified. (Correction: the H.O.P.E. acronym stands for Homeowner Opportunity for Preservation & Equity, not Enhancement as stated.) (Omissions: 1) the comments of Mark Brooks regarding likely expenses for residential building on the 72 Stow Road property and 2) the purpose of monetizing the property.) Vice chair Wagg as meeting secretary will add/correct the minutes as indicated.

NOTE: The Mark Brooks comments are hereby amplified as follows:

1. He said he got the \$4m by assuming 10 units X \$400,000 a unit.
2. He also said there are 2 different building models, i.e.,
 - a) Garden Style – [sounds like apartments] – 3 to 4 stories tall [our case could be different] 700-1,200 sq feet each unit at a cost of about \$300/sq Ft,
 - b) Town House – Multiple floors within the unit 1,200-1,600 sq ft each unit at a cost of about \$400/sq. ft.

III. Old Business

A. Chair Murphy re-opened the topic of an up-to-date appraisal of the 70-72 Stow Road property. He reported on a discussion with Assistant Town Administrator Rajon Hudson regarding the cost of same and that he opined that so long as the cost was less than \$10,000, the housing board could simply draft a Scope of Services (SoS) with which to obtain quotes for the appraisal and select a vendor accordingly.

There then ensued a discussion of how the SoS should be framed, i.e., since the acknowledged approach to land valuation rests largely on its intended use and it does not seem that the board as an entity is entirely clear on this. Key elements of the discussion revolved around the board's still pending decision to either:

- a. place affordable housing on the land given that a viable program of doing so can be identified, or,
- b. monetize the property and use the funds for preserving affordable housing already in place or some similar pro-affordable housing purpose.

Various pros and cons were reviewed. Two decisions were made.

The first, by a vote of three to two, was to invite representatives of Habitat for Humanity and the Acton Housing Authority to address the board on their organizations' interest, or lack thereof, in working with the board to develop the land for affordable housing. **Action Item: C. Wagg will arrange this, including providing the invitees with appropriate information ahead of time.)**

The second, by a vote of four to one, was to prepare a SoS to determine an appropriate vendor to assess the property using "seeking the highest value for the land" as the base criterion.

B. The board then turned its attention to the proposed H.O.P.E. program. Ms. Trinks, chair Murphy and vice chair Wagg each commented on its current status summarized as a meeting earlier in the afternoon with

- Town Administrator Michael Johns to acquaint him with the board's thinking from a conceptual/policy standpoint. Related aspects included the board's intent to request funding from the CPC and that town operational support will be necessary given the project's dimensions.
- C. Chair Murphy commented briefly on the Boxborough Rental Assistance Program (BRAP). Ms. Trinks asked for guidance on the expiration of a current participant's extension. It was moved, seconded and voted to authorize another three months of program participation with a status review at the end of that period.
 - D. Chair Murphy opined that he did not think it necessary for the housing board to request CPC funding at this time for Regional Housing Services.

IV. New Business

- A. Chair Murphy introduced the topic of the Planning Board's request for housing board input regarding the potential use of land encompassed by the Park at Beaverbrook. He opined that Lot 100 could be used for a satellite fire station or possibly affordable housing. The board's thoughts were captured via a questionnaire form completed at that point.
- B. A brief discussion of the Housing Production Plan ensued and it was noted that the percentage of SHI units had diminished from 12.9% in 2010 to 11.35% in 2020. **Action Item: C. Wagg will prepare a "white paper" on the topic of Inclusionary Zoning for the board's review and modification as necessary before presenting it to the Town Planner/Planning Board.**

V. Next Meeting

It was decided to schedule the next meeting on Wednesday, October 25 at 7:00 p.m. in person at the town hall.

VI. Adjournment

It was moved, seconded and approved to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by meeting secretary, vice-chair Channing Wagg

Material Reviewed

Agenda
Minutes 8/16/23 meeting
Notice of 9-11-2001 remembrance
Notice of Join Carbon CREW 2040
Park at Beaverbrook Questionnaire

Action Items (2)

III. A, C. Wagg
IV. B, C. Wagg